The COMMONWEAL

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"Collaboration" and the Spectator

EVER SINCE 1919 we have looked upon Europe and still we are at the play. Men and women are too small for the huge stage: we can see only nations. But, because drama must be acted in terms of right and wrong, bravery, devotion and cowardice, we insist that these nations maintain the attributes of human persons. We clothe them in their history, we see them as they are described to us, we insist that they act according to pattern. In this war these characters appear briefly, salute, pirouette and are gone. Adjusting our applause to the measure of their valor, demanding that the victim die nobly to ennoble our compassion—yet delegate some enduring fiction of itself to London or elsewhere—we cheer, pity and forget. It is a puppet theatre and the play—at least on that part of the revolving stage which is the continent of Europe—is nearly at an end because all the dolls are broken. The play is over; reality persists.

We still, however, think in terms of the play and that is why we have so little understanding for the character, France. No voice speaks from the other conquered countries. We hear only the voices of their fictive governments in London and these voices speak the accustomed words of unchanging defiance of the Germans. But the French people, and the French Government, can only speak the words, undecided and tricky and sad, which are allowed captives. They can only voice the humiliation of defeat. No other nation has been allowed to tell us what that means.

Reflections on the Census

THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS keeps issuing snippets of results from its 1940 head-counting. The latest comes as a blow to decentralists. The bureau sets up what it calls "metropolitan areas," which comprise such urban regions throughout the country as have a population density greater than 150 to the square mile. There are 140 of these areas, with the nation's great cities as their hearts, and they account for almost all the country's population increase in the last decade, as well as 47.8 percent of the whole national population. Far from having a decentralizing effect, then, the depression has increased the proportion of Americans living in congested areas, although this increase has been greater in the peripheries of cities than in the cities themselves. This means that more people are living in suburbs, which is after all better than living in slums, whether those slums be on Delancey Street or Park Avenue.

This does not mean that the metropolitan areas are growing by their own natural increase, while the rural areas stand still. Far from it, for the metropolitan areas do not even reproduce themselves, much less produce any increase. The whole of their increase plus a certain amount of replacement must come from the country; probably the rate of movement citywards is well over 1,000,000 a year. Catholics might well ponder one aspect of this situation. The American countryside is not Catholic; Catholic strength lies and has lain in the cities. But, now that immigration has been cut off as a source, the cities are drawing their people from the country. What will be the effect on the size of the Catholic population? It is calculated that the national population will begin to decline about 1970. Is it not likely that the Catholic population will decline considerably earlier?

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the census figures is how well they bear out the prognostications of the experts connected with the National Resources Committee four years ago. At that time, there was some excuse for not taking the experts' prophesies too seriously; after all they were suppositious, and events might prove them wrong. Events have, on the contrary, shown them unbelievably accurate. (Estimate: 131,650,000; actual population: 131,669,275). Writes Stuart Chase in a pamphlet, "What the New Census Means," published by the Public Affairs Committee: "Say the total population is a target. In the middle the predictors paint a bull's-eye, about 1/200th of the width of the target. . . . The census enumerators . . . hit the bull's-eye less than 1/35th of its width off the center!"

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This means, then, that if present tendencies do not change, many of us will live to see a declining American population. Mr. Chase remarks: "It is a superstition to believe that mere size in itself is good or that constant growth is a blessing . . ." That looks mighty like a rationalization. Of course, bigness is not good in itself, but growth, however slow, is by way of being a blessing. Throughout nature growth is a mark of life; shrinkage one of the symptoms of death. Is this any less true of society? Growth is not necessarily good in itself, but it is generally a blessing: not the only blessing, but one blessing. Mr. Chase lists the economic and business effects of the population changes we are undergoing; he says nothing of the psychological effects, and they are the more important.

The present decentralization of war industry may for a time check the movement cityward and the declining birth rate. More radical changes than that are needed, for all the pressures of our social life favor the causes of our social disease. One cause of the present cataclysm in Europe may well be a biological revolt against those same pressures there. An animal will instinctively risk its own quick, total extinction if it can thereby counter the threat of extinction of the species. And men are also animals.

A Brave's Last Stand

IN THESE DAYS of efficient secret police, concentration camps and firing squads, civil disobedience is a grim term. In the United States, to be sure, the upholding of the law in such matters as alien registration, the draft, the payment of taxes and the like still proceeds in an orderly, reasonable manner. So much so, in fact, that only the most sensational cases of enforcement are detailed in the press, and then usually back toward the society notes. The ruthless or prosaic character of today's ordinary enforcement of authority leads us to cite with much relish a despatch from the great Southwest, where a 90-year-old Indian chief has succeeded in defying the authorities until just the other day. Pia Machita, for one thing, has consistently refused to recognize the Gadsden Purchase which added southern Arizona to the United States in 1853. For years his villages in the Papago Reservation there seem to have been a focus for resistance to the United States. Pia Machita rebelled at the Wheeler-Howard Indian reorganization act in 1935 and for six months flew the Mexican flag over his village. When they came to take the census last year, he chased the enumerators away from the reservation at first, but finally admitted them. Last fall he ordered the young braves in his villages to ignore the Selective Service Act, and when a deputy marshal went to arrest them, October 16, he was manhandled. The circumstances of the old chief's capture are typically colorful. It was the third attempt of a posse of 17 men. This time they were directed by Marshal Ben J. McKinney from an airplane. Circling low over the mesquite bushes through which the Indians were fleeing, he dropped instructions to his own men and led them across the desert to the fugitive. McKinney landed on a reservation road and the officers persuaded Pia Machita that since he was outnumbered further resistance was useless. As a final touch the officers permitted the aged chief to milk his cow and have breakfast before taking him and his young braves to the clink. Indians have a special status before the law, no doubt, and their treatment at the hands of the white settlers and subsequent authorities might well make some of them anything but enthusiastic about serving in the United States army. But the general situation is clear. The vastness of the American West can no longer serve as a haven for the most indignant and obstinate rebels. A tomahawk is hardly proof against an airplane.

Debate on Released Time

IN THE FEW months since the released time law for religious instruction went into effect in New York City, its opponents have been disproportionately busy. It is not claimed that the technique of utilizing released time fully and frictionlessly has been mastered. However, the chief objections to it seem to stem not from incidental mistakes in practice but from the principle of released time itself. This was shown afresh in the debate on the subject at the recent conference of New York Kindergarten Teachers regarding the function of public schools in protecting democracy. Dr. Everett Clinchy, of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, ably outlined the defense, stressing the dangers to constitutional liberty in the lack of religious training, and the possibilities which released time holds for teaching cooperation, understanding and mutual respect among religions. The attack, led by Mr. Kenneth Leslie, editor of the *Protestant Digest,* was widened from the floor: released time was viewed as an injurious element in education, as needless in view of the free time existing after school, as an imposition not in accord with the will of the people, as an inevitable breeder of bigotry, as an open door to parochial school support, the weakening of the public schools, and thence, by logical ascent, "clerical-fascism" and the ultimate "church-controlled state." It is obviously not possible even to classify these objections in full, to say nothing of dealing with them properly, but they are instructive in showing the inflexibility of the secularist mind to anything beyond its own premises. There is a doctrine that holds religion to be an integral part of education. This is the doctrine behind the released-time law, and it is

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what should be debated first in a debate on that law. To say that there is time outside of school for religion is—even when true, which is by no means always—to evade the main point at issue. And to call out the old bogeys, beginning with "the attack on the public schools" and ending with "the church-controlled state," is to talk in a way which makes a hard demand on the charity of the intelligent listener. It is up to Catholics and their fellow-Christians so to conduct and develop this important venture of released time that the truth will be clear to all. And the truth is that the seed of modern liberty is not in secularism but in Jewish and Christian doctrine.

Leverage and Pressure

DURING the past decade the unemployment of men and productive capacity was so great that it threatened the whole structure of American society. Labor had first to meet the problem of existing in the midst of depression. Members of what is called "labor" did not have land or other property of their own by which they could produce their own living; they were dependent on wages from jobs, or, failing that, relief from a private or public source. Secondly, the status of labor was threatened by the pressure of the unemployed, competing for the jobs available; men were selling their labor in what was, by its economic nature, a wide open buyers' market. With the war and the defense program, labor's problems have swung to the opposite pole, but they have not become much easier. Unused productive capacity, however dangerous it is when it is as great as it was during the depression, still gives society a natural margin for error, and flexibility, and a sphere for liberty. While, during the depression, there was, economically speaking, too much of almost every commodity on the market, no sacrifices were indicated for the production of things themselves. The great problem was to offer unemployed men an opportunity to work, to get a pay check and take some of the excess products off the market.

Now the problem is underproduction and the pressure is on to get more and more work out of labor. The employee class is eased of the pressure of the unemployed and is thereby strengthened. But to compensate for this advantage, society in general and the government are pushed by armament requirements to exert pressure on any particular group of workers. The pressure of efficiency and full production takes the place of the pressure of idleness and the unemployed. A new set of statistics reflects the new problem of labor: "In modern mechanized warfare," *Newsweek* estimates, "at least a dozen behind-the-lines workmen, of whom nine must be skilled or semi-skilled, are needed to provide every front-line soldier with supplies and fighting equipment." That we are pushing productive abilities is proved by hoped for and actual armament expenditures. During the first quarter of 1941 the government spent on arms only $2,140,000,000—a rate of $8,500,000,000 annually. The hope had been that $17,500,000,000 would be spent this year, and in 1942, $22,000,000,000. Last year the unemployed figure was about 9,500,000 and now it is 7,000,000 and it is expected to drop 3,000,000 more by next year. Work training plans are being jumped: ". . . Recently formed OPM plans for increasing the present 1,000,000 government-sponsored trainees to 2,000,000 by this time next year are being stepped up anew by 50 percent." In such a situation, strikes become important; there simply is no slack to accommodate them with the imperatives accepted by the country and executed by the government. It is estimated that so far this year the strike loss has been 10,000,000 man-days. There is a demand for labor in general and for trained labor in particular which tends to override the full liberty of working people just as lack of demand did a few years ago.

A second great check on labor action comes with rumors of price inflation and the necessity for price control. The intelligent *Business Week* notes: "Appearing before a House Ways and Means Committee hearing on tax proposals, the Price Administrator [Leon Henderson] suggested that Congress give serious consideration to abolishing the 40-hour week in defense industries. . . . The point is now being made by industry that, with surplus manpower almost exhausted in many important job categories and the reason for work-spreading gone, the limitation becomes simply a cost-inflating factor." Labor groups must bargain against the whole country and the government during the defense crisis when it advances its interests in regard to wages, hours and speed of work.

Labor wants a hand in forming economic policy and it wants leverage against those whose interests are not its own. When it works directly for the government, or indirectly for the government in industries supplying the government, it still needs leverage and protection against the totality. The CIO plans, the most definite yet suggested in the labor camp, seem to assume that no important questions would come up between labor and management which a government chairman could not decide in a manner satisfactory to the CIO. This appears to be an exploded socialistic hope and a denial of the inevitable condition of society wherein the direct interest of a particular group is bound to differ from what the totality considers to be its general interest. Indeed, the totality is bound to gain selfishly and on the material plane by the sacrifice of a group. So also, the representative of the government may not represent exclusively a pure abstraction of the common good. There will be work to do on the labor problem when there is no unemployment, just as when there was entirely too much.

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Industrial Peace in Canada

How Canada has handled her industrial problems in wartime.

By **Henry Somerville**

SINCE the settlements last month of many of the strikes in United States steel, coal and automotive industries, Canadians have not been unduly disturbed by reports of economic strife that might have spread contagion northward. Canada's own industrial effort will be small, absolutely speaking, beside that of the United States at peak; nevertheless the people of the Dominion take some pride in what they have done, though they are far from complacent and there is much urgent self-criticism spurring to greater achievement.

It is not with Canada's contribution to the war that this article is concerned, but with her success in securing harmony and cooperation between labor and capital. She is not in the front line like Britain; she is as much protected by distance as the United States, yet even Britain does not show greater unity in her industrial ranks. Absolute strikelessness does not seem attainable in a democracy, for Britain lost 24,000 man-working days through industrial disputes in January. Canada lost only 3,238 days in the same month. The United States lost 625,000 days. This month is mentioned only because it is the latest for which figures can be given for all three countries, and the reader is not asked to draw any conclusions from a single month. But he may take it as a fact that since the war began Canada has stepped up her production to a phenomenal extent with an almost negligible development of friction between employers and unions. The Dominion's war expenditures for the first quarter of this year were at the rate of a billion dollars annually; the rate is still rising rapidly. There are more than 2,700,000 wage-earners in Canada; probably they are proportionately as much unionized as those in the United States. Thus our immunity from industrial ills cannot be attributed to the absence of predisposing material conditions.

There is no magic or even novelty in Canada's machinery for industrial peace, the legislation for mediation, conciliation, arbitration and the like. Most other countries have as much and often more of this apparatus. But it has been an advantage that Canada did not have to improvise the machinery. The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act was enacted in 1907 to apply to public utility industries and mines; during the World War it was extended to apply to defense industries, and precisely the same has been done in the present war. Investigation of a dispute by a board under a neutral chairman is compulsory, and the board makes recommendations for a settlement, but there is no compulsion on any disputant to accept the recommendations.

Actually the recommendations of these boards are being accepted in practically every case where they are made, and settlements of other disputes are reached by negotiation between the parties, perhaps with the aid of Government conciliation officers, but without using the machinery of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act. This happy state of affairs is due ultimately to common sense and good will on the part of Canadian employers and unions and to the helpful leadership of the Government; but speaking more concretely it is due to agreement between the parties concerned on certain clear and practical principles for determining wages and other conditions of employment. In June, 1940, there was an agreed declaration between representatives of employers and unions that there should be no strikes or lock-outs and that disputes that could not be settled directly between the parties concerned should be referred to arbitration. In December, 1940, there was a fuller declaration in the form of an Order-in-Council, the paper being officially known as P. C. 7440. The earlier declaration had approved "fair and reasonable standards of wages"; the later declaration supplied a yardstick for measuring the fair and reasonable. Briefly, the fair and reasonable wartime wage is the highest rate prevailing in the trade in question at any time before the war from the period 1926-29 onward. Everyone will remember that 1926-29 represented pre-depression wages. The standard taken was liberal to labor without being extravagant. If it can be shown that there are trades which during the pre-war period had abnormally low wages, these can be raised to standard. Wages in a trade are "abnormally" low if they are lower than those prevailing in other comparable trades.

The standard fair and reasonable wage having been taken as the best pre-war rates of the period after 1926, provision is made for bonuses to be paid in compensation for any increased cost of living. The cost-of-living bonus is so much per

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hour or per week; it is not a percentage of wages, and it is the same amount for the men with the highest and the lowest wage rates.

A good rule of thumb

Here we have a rule of thumb for settling all wage questions. It is effective because it is agreed upon. Ethical and economic pundits could write volumes in theoretical criticism of it, but it has been working well during recent times in Canada. As this is the tenth anniversary of *Quadragesimo Anno,* it is interesting to compare the principles of P. C. 7440 with the three—or four—rules given by Pius XII for determining the justice of wages: (1) the needs of the worker, (2) the capacity of the business to pay, (3) the national interest. The Pope adds that the proportion between the wages paid in different occupations should also be taken into account.

Canadian labor has virtually bound itself not to attempt to profit from the war, but to be content with the best pre-war rates plus compensation for any increased cost of living. In return it receives the assurance that as far as possible capital will be prevented from increasing its rate of profit. Besides provincial taxes there is a Federal tax of 18 percent on all corporation profits and there is an excess profits tax of 75 percent on the excess of current profits over pre-war profits.

Fixing prices

A most important related and concurrent effort of the Government is to stabilize the cost of living. The machinery for this is the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, which has power to fix prices. It has done so in a few cases, but as a rule it has attained its end by keeping down the prices of the necessaries of life by securing adequate supplies. The cost of living in Canada since the beginning of the war has increased only 7.3 percent.

Agreement by representatives of capital and labor on a rule of thumb for settling wage questions is not quite sufficient to guarantee industrial peace. There is always some capital (and some labor) not represented, and wage questions are not the only ones to cause disputes. The good will, the common sense and the helpful Government leadership which brought about the agreement on the rule of thumb have to be constantly available to decide other issues.

One such issue is that of union recognition, which in practice often means the closed shop. Canada has nothing like the Wagner Act compelling employers to recognize unions. The Government seems to have given its blessing to the principle of union recognition, but without putting any pressure on employers. P. C. 7440 and other declarations left the question undecided, and a just inference seemed to be that the *status quo ante bellum* had a presumption in its favor. Unions should not take advantage of the war to force recognition by employers who would not have given it but for the war. However, as there was no static situation before the war, there must be movement now. There was a dispute between the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes shipping companies and the seamen's union. The large majority of companies recognized the union in accord with the recommendation of a Government arbitrator, but about seven companies refused to recognize the union, which thereupon declared a strike at the beginning of the navigation season. All but two of the companies have come into line, and the Minister of Labor has shown sympathy with the strike against the two recalcitrants. The union thinks the Government could have made its sympathy more practical by prosecuting the two companies for sailing their ships short-handed, but the likelihood is that the union itself will soon force them to yield.

Steel strike

A strike of over 300 workers in a steel rolling mill at Montreal is now in its third week. Various demands were made which were referred to an investigating board. This board recommended recognition of the union—the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee—but by a majority vote rejected demands for increased wages. The basic wage with cost-of-living allowance is 32 cents an hour; about 50 percent of the employees are getting no more than this. It is admitted that the pre-war rates were no higher, but the labor nominee on the board argued they were abnormally low and should be raised. The majority of the board thought differently. Two or three days after the strike started the Government asked the workers to take out 124 tons of finished steel needed for defense in Newfoundland. The Government guaranteed 40 cents an hour for this work to the men who did it, and the work was done, but the strike goes on and is certainly a hard test for our rule of thumb.

Early this month a two-day strike of 2,700 steelworkers at Hamilton ended dramatically and significantly. The strike was precipitated when the employing corporation discharged a SWOC union official. There must have been some hot private exchanges between the Government and the corporation, and the corporation must have been adamant, for the Government took over the control of the plant. Next day the corporation, which is powerful and wealthy, had large advertisements in the daily papers defending its attitude. The union official was said to have been discharged for absenting himself from his work, and it was said he had been charged with obtaining relief by false pretenses!

The Government's quick and drastic action came as a surprise, but it has aroused little criti-

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cism. Probably the Government was hastened in its action by the threat of sympathetic strikes in other steel plants (much was said about such strikes being illegal), but this may have been merely inspired talk, to suggest that the Government could get tough with unions as well as with corporations.

Nobody suggests that everything is rosy in the Canadian scene, and that still unsettled strike of the 300 steel rollers at Montreal reminds us that the principle of P. C. 7440 may still be in peril, but the fact remains that Canadian production has been in high gear for a long period and nothing but small scuffles have disturbed its industrial peace since it declared war against nazi Germany in September, 1939.

Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan

Those were days never to return.

By **Grenville Vernon**

THE OPERA in New York from 1908 to 1920—we who were young then know that it was touched with magic! There were giants in those days—Enrico Caruso of the golden voice; Geraldine Farrar, whose smile could dim the tiaras of an opening night audience; Pasquale Amato, whose baritone shook the candelabras; Antonio Scotti, supremest of operatic villains; Emmy Destinn, incomparable as Aida and Gioconda; Olive Fremstad, greatest of Wagnerian actresses; and in the conductor's stand, a little black-haired man, so near-sighted that he couldn't use a score, but who could make the orchestra sound as it has never sounded since — Arturo Toscanini. This was the Metropolitan. A few blocks away in Thirty-Fourth Street was the Manhattan, opened in 1906 by Oscar Hammerstein, under whose egis were Mary Garden, the greatest operatic actress of them all; Maurice Renaud, the finest Don Giovanni and Rigoletto since Victor Maurel; Luisa Tetrazzini, coloratura with a dramatic soprano voice; and Hector Dufranne, whose voice in beauty and power rivalled that of Amato himself.

The Manhattan is no more, though the auditorium still stands and still houses occasional public meetings. As we wander through its lobby ghosts flit by, and the voices of nights long since vanished come back to us. Indeed the old house is filled with ghosts. Yet those ghosts are very real, for the Manhattan of 1908-1910 was a vital part of New York, and the doings of Garden, Tetrazzini and John McCormick were as closely followed then by the man in the street as are those now of Greta Garbo or Joe Di Maggio. *Eheu fugaces!*—as they used to say when kids still studied Latin.

Today opera singers are sensible human beings, but in those days they were true to fiction in their temperament and quarrels, and the places where they sang were a mixture of Aladdin's Cave and a mad-house. We of the press assigned to record the doings in these places of wonder found ourselves indeed in a magic cave. Never in the history of opera had the news writer been given such a chance. And the reason for this was a little man who wore a bell-shaped high silk hat out of a French comic paper, and who smoked interminable evil-smelling cigars which he made himself. His name was Oscar Hammerstein.

Hammerstein built the Manhattan with profits derived from his Victoria Music Hall. Though he built it in what was then a cheap neighborhood it cost so much and the singers he brought from Europe so much more that bets were made on Broadway that it would never open. Even Hammerstein himself, when asked what opera he would open it with, replied: "I'm going to open it with debts."

But open it he did, even though the seats weren't all in place until four o'clock on the opening day. At first the going was hard, but Oscar Hammerstein was fortunately a superb showman. He knew he must attract people to his opera who had never gone to opera before and that the only way to reach them was through the newspapers. Any newspaper man could get in to the Manhattan free, while we who were especially assigned to the opera found ourselves given the run of the theatre, not only in front but on the stage—and during performances. This was unprofessional and violated all tradition. Hammerstein laughed. He said that was the trouble with opera—it was hidebound with tradition and professionalism. What it needed was a dose of the amateur spirit.

Modern Svengali

I can see him now, seated in the wings in the first entrance left, his silk hat on his head, his cigar wafting noxious odors toward the singers

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on the stage. Yet they never complained. The fact that his eyes were continually on them made them sing as they never had before. His presence imparted something vibrant to the atmosphere, as if it charged the air on the stage with electricity. We felt that everything was possible, that anything might happen, and this excitement flowed across the footlights to the orchestra, thence to the audience and on up to the topmost gallery. We used to wander about the stage, getting in the way of the stage-hands, talking to the singers, flirting with the ladies of the chorus. The chorus at the Manhattan, unlike that of its rival, was young and good to look upon. It was made up largely of music students who hoped some day to be stars. I myself learned to speak French by talking, while the opera was on, with a young lady from Berlin. Why we talked French I don't know, but I'm glad we did, even though my accent still bears a slight Germanic tinge. Once she missed a cue, and arrived late on the stage. The chorus-master almost fired her for it, but I was never spoken to. The good will even of the youngest member of the press was too valuable to be jeopardized.

The press-agent at the Manhattan was the famous William J. Guard, "Bill" to every newspaper man in America. Enrico Caruso subsequently dubbed him "l'anguila," "the eel." Bill Guard was tall, fantastically thin, with stooping shoulders and a face strikingly like that of Robert Louis Stevenson. He was an Irishman, with a courtesy of manner belonging to another age, physically, mentally and spiritually the antithesis of his employer, and therefore an ideal coadjutor. His chief duty wasn't to get news into the papers, but to keep news out. Lack of money continually threatened the closing of the Manhattan, and there were frequent rows with singers, even occasional refusals to appear. All this wouldn't have done Hammerstein any good if it had appeared in print. Then it was that Guard would appeal to us, and such was his charm that either nothing at all was printed or the story was written so as to appear quite innocuous.

His office was a tiny cubby-hole off the main lobby. In it reigned pandemonium, for people were always running in with demands for free tickets, requests for interviews or for news. I never knew Guard to lose his temper, or even to appear excited. He was the diplomat *in excelsis*. He should have been appointed Ambassador to his beloved France—with someone to keep his desk in order. It was piled high with letters and papers. He never destroyed anything—just threw it on top of what was already there. His desk was truly a symbol of the confusion about him. I think he used it to absorb the excitement which might otherwise have overwhelmed him. But though Bill Guard was a master diplomat, there were times when he didn't succeed—for instance the time when Mme. Tetrazzini refused at the last moment to go on in "Lucia."

A diva demurs

Mme. Tetrazzini was very superstitious, and she was also at that particular period very much in love. Among her superstitions was one which was the bane of her impresario's existence. Just before she went on in an opera she would always drop a stiletto onto the floor of her dressing-room. If it stuck in the planking all was well, but if it didn't, she would shriek that the "evil eye" was on her. She would then proceed to have ten minutes of hysterics, while the curtain was held, and Guard and the young Italian she was in love with worked to quiet her. Then she would go on and sing—often very badly for the first five minutes if she felt that the "evil eye" had not been completely exorcised. This particular time her *cavaliere servente* wasn't in the theatre. He was sick in bed with the flu. The stiletto having refused to stick in the floor, Tetrazzini's hysterics ensued, and Bill Guard alone couldn't stop them. Between shrieks the soprano demanded her "caro Armando." It didn't matter whether he was sick in bed or not—she wouldn't sing unless he came to hold her hand. There was nothing to do but for Hammerstein himself to get into a taxi and drive to the sick-room, while Guard stepped before the curtain and told the audience that the opening would be slightly delayed. What persuasion Hammerstein used upon the ailing swain was never known, but he got him into the taxi, hundred and one fever and all, and deposited him in Mme. Tetrazzini's dressing-room. Ten minutes later the star, all smiles, swept upon the stage, while "caro Armando," shivering and coughing, was bundled back into his taxi. Love had triumphed where diplomacy had failed.

And then there was the battle between Mary Garden and the Italian soprano, Lina Cavaliere. Miss Garden had created in America the part of the Alexandrian courtesan in Massenet's "Thais," and therefore considered that she had a monopoly on it. Hammerstein had just engaged Mme. Cavaliere, and had billed her as "the most beautiful woman in the world." She was not, however, much of an actress, and he wanted to present her in a part where her beauty might make one forget her lack of histrionic ability. Unfortunately he chose "Thais" without consulting Miss Garden. The announcement was made in the morning newspapers, with the additional item that Mme. Cavaliere would wear all her world-famous jewels. I was then music editor of the *Times*, and when I reported at noon at the office, Arthur Grieves, the city editor, met me with a grin.

"Do you know," he asked, "who was just here demanding to see you? Mary Garden! She

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barged in past the office boys, right up to my desk, and was she angry! She says she will never sing again at the Manhattan if Cavaliere gets Thais."

By the time I reached her apartment Miss Garden's anger had sent her to bed, and it was in bed that I saw her. I can see it now, that bed—a magnificent affair as theatric as the angry prima donna sitting up in it, telling me what she thought of Hammerstein and la Cavaliere. It was a wonder that her words didn't set fire to the bed clothes, but what it all boiled down to was that Hammerstein must at once withdraw Cavaliere's name from "Thais," and that I must write for the *Times* just what she said to me. I promised I would—and I did—but not *all* she said. An angry prima donna has small regard for the laws of libel. The next day Bill Guard sent out an announcement that Mme. Cavaliere would appear in an opera other than "Thais." There were those who accused Miss Garden of an excess of temperament, but I'm inclined to think it was just hard-headed Scottish common-sense.

It was Oscar Hammerstein who rejuvenated opera in New York. By giving "Pelleas," "Louise," "Thais," "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame," he introduced to our delighted ears modern French opera, while in Tetrazzini he had a singer capable of giving the old Italian works more brilliantly than they had recently been given uptown. Because of his coming the Metropolitan had to bestir itself. It brought Giulio Gatti-Casazza from the Scala in Milan to be its General Manager, with Arturo Toscanini as its chief conductor. The rivalry between the two houses was intense. One night they were giving the same opera (I think it was "Rigoletto") with Tetrazzini and Constantino at the Manhattan and a distinctly inferior cast at the Metropolitan. During the performance the news arrived at the Manhattan that the Metropolitan was only half filled. The word was carried backstage just as the curtain was falling on the third act in a house filled to suffocation. The audience must have wondered what had caused the sudden burst of cheering from the stage, and it would have wondered more if the curtain had been lifted and it had seen the whole company, including the two-hundred-pound Tetrazzini, join hands and dance wildly about the stage, whooping as it danced.

It was this personal interest of the singers in the success of the new house which made the performances at the Manhattan unique. And then Hammerstein had the faculty of springing sensational surprises—Mary Garden's Dance of the Seven Veils in "Salomé"; the début of Orville Harrold, ex-driver of a hearse, burlesque and vaudeville tenor, who at thirty-nine sang opera for the first time, sharing honors with Tetrazzini herself; the return to New York of Calvé, Melba and Nordica. These all made New York sit up and take notice.

But Hammerstein's last season, that of 1909-10, marked a falling off. It is true that he gave the first American performance of Strauss's "Elektra," but that was the only outstanding event. Moreover he had quarrelled with his chief conductor, Cleofonte Campanini, and the man he had engaged to take his place, a Dutch musician named De la Fuente, proved distinctly inferior. I remember a remark concerning his conducting of "Carmen" made by Charles Henry Meltzer, the music critic of the New York *American*. Meltzer came into the press-room after the second act and said: "Mr. De la Fuente and his musicians remind me of the story of the barker outside a tent-show, who bawled out to passers-by: 'Ladies and gentlemen, come inside and see Daniel in the Lions' Den! Daniel doesn't give a damn for the lions, and the lions don't give a damn for Daniel!'"

It well expressed the way things went on in the orchestra that night and the way they had actually been going on for some time. Meltzer wasn't usually so witty. He was a mild mannered man of sixty, who because he had once lived in the Latin Quarter and had spoken to the poet Verlaine, considered himself the last of the bohemians. He wore his hair long, that is in back, for in front he was completely bald, and, like Rodolfo's in "La Boheme," it stuck out from under a broad-brimmed black felt hat. He also affected an overcoat with a cape. He was always translating operas into English, and not too effectively at that. He considered himself something of a character and this he actually was in a mild sort of way. Peace to his ashes. And peace to the ashes too of Oscar Hammerstein, who *was* a character—a character such as New York will never see again.

Two Fingers Through

It is no sign that I must pause
To change my husking glove because
A finger has come through. I may
Husk on and finish out the day
With half the hand in nakedness.
But when an agent seeks to bless
Me with his bargain, and between
The rows comes striding to the scene
And reaches forth his hand to shake
It is not meet that I should take
The time first to unbuckle three
Straps of my husking hook. The free
Hand should be offered, yes. But here,
The way things are, it is quite clear
That this mailed, ragged glove must do.
An agent is a human, too,
And he, as such, will understand
The touch, in part, of hand to hand—
I would say that (to guess it rough)
Two fingers through should be enough.

ALBERT EISELE.

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Financing Medical Service

Buffalo credit unions now provide general hospitalization and a practical answer to economic arguments for birth control.

By **Edward Skillin, Jr.**

IT HAD BEEN a full afternoon. Father William J. Kelley, O.M.I., public relations director of the National Institute of Federal Credit Unions, Inc., had been bringing me up to date on their great progress in Buffalo. We had been looking into things at Baldwin's furniture store, taking time enough to get a parking ticket from the ever-watchful city police. He had also driven me to one of the city hospitals to get the personal reactions of the hospital authorities. We had visited Mrs. Knapp, enthusiastic treasurer of one of the many parish credit unions, in her home, and had made a number of telephone calls. We had had supper at D'Youville College and spent time discussing things with the pioneering Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart and with an interested local physician. Between times Father Kelley filled in with a steady dissertation on what the country needed and on his plans. My doubts as to whether Buffalo had so much more of its share of good neighborliness and civic virtue and religious zeal were beginning to waver.

A small circle of us that evening were ranged around the public relations director's spacious flat-topped desk; Father Kelley was leaning back in his swivel chair surveying the office, his teeth clamped on a fresh cigar. He turned first to Jack, a tall young man of 25 in a blue sweater, his blonde hair slicked back. Jack works in a neighboring drugstore and he fell to talking about the boys who frequently drop in for a coke, a pack of cigarettes or a go at the money machine, or just to while away the time before a "date." Most of them weren't making enough to deposit in the bank, but he would get them to kick in a quarter or 4 bits each week for their credit union. Jack said he keeps after them until they develop the habit of saving. And if they happen to hit the right combination on the money machine, he gets them to bank most of their winnings with him. This caused a murmur of surprise. Jack said that the boys thought a lot of the credit union and realized that it was giving them a toehold for facing the future.

The cigar was drawing well. Dark-eyed Teresa, another of the younger members, smiled quietly and said that the credit union meant more to the women than the men. Women are the better savers. They will teach thrift to their husbands and children so that "the providers can provide better," as she put it. The director was happy to repeat the catchy saying.

Dave Getman, 21-year-old secretary to Father Kelley, began from another angle. He asserted that from the moment a man pays his first 25c and joins a credit union he has security. And the young man with credit union savings and credit union security is not under compulsion to take whatever job first comes his way, but can look around for an opening for which he is well fitted. If his present job has no future in it, he doesn't have to hang on in ill-paid drudgery; he can afford to be somewhat independent. And he can make plans for getting married without waiting for the death of the senior partner. He can look ahead to the day when he can retire. Dave spoke out strongly for starting school children with a nickel a week credit union club and teaching them how to keep books early in the game. He seemed to know what people of his age want and what they are up against.

The cigar stub was shorter now and Father Kelley swung further clockwise in his swivel chair. The next contribution was from Michael Sullivan, treasurer of the Holy Angels Parish credit union, a substantial Buffalo attorney, who spends several evenings a week on the credit union books. His idea was that the service the credit unions were rendering the people was religion interpreted from a practical point of view. He backed up what Mrs. Knapp had said earlier in the day: when the members heard of the new hospital and maternity services, they said it was too good to be true.

The swing of the circle was completed when Dave's father, Charles Getman, a civil engineer, took up the conversational thread. He is president of Holy Angels Parish credit union. Starting with the brutality and bewilderment in the world today, he voiced the conviction that the man in the street can be reached only through becoming aware of the humanity of Christ. Only the Christian works of mercy will reach the masses now. Too often priests do not succeed in reaching their people from the pulpit on Sunday; too often they are unable to get close to their people. Our model, Christ the Worker, fed the multitude. Our fellow-members in the Mystical Body must be clothed and fed. Working together builds spirituality and Mr. Getman gave testimony that since he had become active in the credit union, he could

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no longer look upon his fellow-parishioners impersonally; he was conscious of a strong, personal bond between them.

Good night

Everyone had had his say, it was 8:30, and there was hardly time to light another cigar. So we shook hands all around and set out in various directions. Jack and Teresa stayed on to complete some work. Michael Sullivan went into the parish credit union office to go over his beloved books, Charles Getman to his home, I to some patient friends, Father Kelley and Dave Getman to another meeting.

Yes, big things are happening in Buffalo. Since my visit in the fall, membership in the credit unions has grown from 10,000 to 25,000. Functioning actively are 25 credit unions formed at places of employment—dairies, laundries, hospitals, schools, libraries, Van Raalte Silk, Shredded Wheat, American Radiator, American Car and Foundry, etc., etc. Union locals have organized 22 more: bakers, barbers, brewers, bricklayers, brickmakers, carpenters, electricians, firemen-oilers, flour and feed workers, grain operators, machinists, metal polishers, plasterers, pressmen, printers, produce workers and upholsterers. Catholic parish credit unions number 16. A few fraternal and housing credit unions complete the roster. Forty-five of the 70 are members of the National Institute of Federal Credit Unions, Inc., of which more anon. And this movement is gaining terrific momentum in a turbulent industrial center of 600,000 people —a city of distinct racial and national groups, of new world and old world rivalries, of Poles, Germans, Italians, Irish, Negroes, a city widely known for the unresponsiveness of its populace. To think that in one cosmopolitan city alone in two years 25,000 people have learned to share in varying degrees the experience and sentiments similar to those expressed above!

The evidence is mounting that here is a plan that will work anywhere, a plan that is specifically designed for large industrial cities, where unhappily three-quarters of the American Catholic population is concentrated. It is a plan that tackles head on the economic difficulties back of so many of our major social problems. It is a plan based on the principle of free association so prominent in the social encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI now being commemorated the world over. As Bishop Muench said in the May 23 issue of THE COMMONWEAL, credit unions contribute the all-important element of social charity to social reconstruction. Father Kelley is convinced that Catholics today are challenged to prove that they have a philosophy of life, a reasonable plan for living in these stressful times. He insists that our new techniques, to be successful, must work in the big city. And the economic and financial achievements made possible by concerted human action in the spirit of brotherhood lead directly to spiritual ends.

Group buying

This period of marked expansion has been something more than bigger membership, increase in loans to members, in dividends, reserves or even in deepening consciousness what can be accomplished when people work together. The credit unions have also started to provide a wider range of services. One of these, group buying, centers in a leading furniture store, for the cause of much of the financial anxiety low-income families have to undergo is paying for rugs, ice-boxes, furniture and other major household items. Few if any banks will lend them money and they have to resort to expensive instalment buying or high-interest personal finance companies. Anxiety over such matters often disturbs the peace of the home, takes a man's mind from his work, leads to attachment of wages, forcible removal of house furnishings and other demoralizing experiences.

At the Baldwin furniture store on East Genesee Street an agreement has been made with the National Institute of Federal Credit Unions. Some 5,000 courtesy cards have been printed for interested members whose group purchasing power and payment of cash on the line (borrowed if necessary from their credit unions at low rate of interest) give them such a handsome reduction from the list price that they cannot match the bargain anywhere in the city. As we sat in the well-filled basement surrounded by gleaming white refrigerators George Baldwin told us how much he liked that type of business. Before we left he took us next door to show us the two floors he was fixing up to take care of his increased business due to the agreement.

What the arrangement can do for a family is well illustrated by the purchases made by a prospective bride and groom just before my arrival in town. After shopping all over town they found the agreement with Baldwin's enabled them to save the tidy sum of $200 in furnishing their modest home. They plan to marry this summer and start housekeeping in the fall. By placing their order and paying cash on the line, thanks to the Blessed Trinity parish credit union, they were also able to take advantage of current prices before the rise in prices had set in. Could this couple and their friends be anything but credit union enthusiasts? This incident also gives a hint what can be accomplished by consumers cooperative stores.

Hospitalization

A major step in recent weeks is the agreement signed between the national institute and the Sisters of Charity Hospital in Buffalo and Our Lady of Victory Hospital of Lackawanna, N. Y. This

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enables members to enjoy a 10 percent discount on their bill, which is rendered a week after admission and once a week thereafter. This is an important item for families with a modest budget, but even more important, I should think, is the way the credit union helps each member to make these payments. Father Tighe, an associate of Father Kelley's in the Oblate House, told of visiting a young woman, who had broken her ankle, the eve of her discharge from the hospital. He found that the girl was frantic because she could not pay her bill (hospitals are popularly believed to refuse to discharge patients who do not pay their bills). How could she possibly get the money by noon the next day? Father Tighe told her about the credit union and she welcomed the suggestion. He got in touch with the union's credit committee and by 12:20 the next day placed the check in the hands of the incredulous young woman. A friend of hers who heard of the incident took a very serious debt out of the hands of a finance company five days later. And so the movement grows.

The spiritual purpose back of this and the maternity plan was undoubtedly the main factor in persuading the Sisters' hospitals to agree to a contract, but the agreement also has many features that appeal to the hospital from a self-interested point of view. Sister Hortense, superior of the Sisters of Charity Hospital, graciously delayed attending an important meeting downtown to give us her reactions to the plan. Smiling out from beneath the broad-brimmed, picturesque, white-starched "cap," which, with the deep blue habit, is the identifying mark of the Sisters of Charity, she said, "The hospital bill is usually last on the family budget, you know. And there are times when you cannot press people for payment. Now the credit union is my bill collector."

Sister Hortense then told of the difference she had noted in visitor and patient. People will worry about themselves and their relatives, of course, but once the anxiety about paying the bill was removed, she noticed that faces looked less tense. Visitors seem happier to come now.

Out in the hall we met Sister Juliana who reported that new patients had been coming in faster than expected and that general patients were twice as numerous as maternity cases thus far. As the credit unions were building up patronage for the hospital, so the authorities there were in turn aiding the credit unions by referring all inquiries about the plan to pastors of local parishes. And the plan will help other hospitals, too, for one of the best non-sectarian hospitals in the city is about ready to sign a similar contract.

The maternity plan

All these things have their points and they are obviously important applications of the technique of the Christian works of mercy. But the jewel in the crown, the development over which Father Kelley is most overjoyed, is the credit union maternity plan. It is well to recall at this point that this zealous Oblate of Mary Immaculate went about for three years giving parish missions in various parts of the United States. He saw that the people needed help, he realized what terrific economic problems families have and he appreciated how the weight of adverse economic forces led so often to the evils of birth control. He studied the institutions feasible for meeting these needs of the people, spent months observing them in action, consulting with leaders from Antigonish and other centers. The first answer was the credit union; the second, the maternity service plan.

The program has three parts, any one or combination of which is available to members of credit unions affiliated with the national institute. The Sisters of Charity Hospital, for instance, provides ten days' hospitalization in a maternity ward for $36, in a semi-private room for $43, a private room for from $58.50 to $76.50—a saving at the outset of from 10 to 14 percent.

The second plank in the platform is the doctor, although, as intimated above, anyone may have his own doctor. The idea is to have several capable doctors who contract with the national institute to provide pre-natal care, normal delivery and post-natal care at a moderate rate. Consultations in difficult cases are also to be provided for at extremely reasonable rates. The patient has the say as to what is to be done in these matters.

Finally, a group of carefully selected women is being built up to supervise the home, while the mother is in the hospital. This means getting the father's and children's breakfast and dinner, taking care of the children when they come home from school or all day long if they are too young for school. It means assuring the mother that all will go well with her home while she is in the hospital. These women will be fairly paid for their highly important services.

The object is to provide all three of these—complete maternity service—for the sum of $100. How well this is within the reach of the employed worker can be grasped when the credit union's rôle in this picture is made clear. The prospective father may borrow the whole sum of $100 from his credit union. If he pays it back at the rate of $10 a month plus 1 percent of the unpaid balance each month, the sum total of $5.50 is the only interest charge. Is it any wonder that credit union members on hearing of these new services thought they were too good to be true, that some even wished they hadn't had to go to the hospital before it went into effect? What priest fighting the evil of birth control would not like to have available so practical an answer to the economic hazard for the people in his parish?

It would be an error, I should think, to consider the new maternity services apart from the

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day to day activity of the various Buffalo credit unions. The fear of the expenses involved in having a baby is part of the more general fear of being unable to meet the everyday expenses occasioned by an addition to the family. It is often openly expressed by young couples who say that they plan not to have any children for the first two or three years. Such fears are common with people who already have one or two children. Hence the importance for this purpose of enabling "the providers to provide better."

The maternity plan is only at its beginnings; its development will require months of intelligent supervision and care. But Father Kelley and Sister Grace and the other interested Grey Nuns of D'Youville College are not content to stop there. What will the next step be? There are now in Buffalo thousands of people from all walks of life flush with the first enthusiasm of learning what they can accomplish by working together in the spirit of human brotherhood. Whether the next step is cooperative stores, back-to-the-land, or some other form of cooperative endeavor, we may be sure of several things. With a dynamic leader like Father Kelley, and a forward-looking education center such as D'Youville College these people will take up a step specifically suited to local needs. Because of the complexities in Buffalo these techniques will serve in almost any urban area and the movement will continue its rapid spread to other cities. Finally, this vigorous people's organism will continue to move forward.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IN REVIEWING a new book by Benedetto Croce, the Italian philosopher and historian, Professor Arthur Livingston of Columbia University, in the May 18 issue of *Books,* the literary section of the New York *Herald Tribune's* Sunday paper, makes a number of highly pertinent observations concerning the lamentable extent to which the forces of public opinion are today formed and led by politicians and journalists and radio commentators largely ignorant of history, save for what they know, or think they know, about the welter of immediate events, plus what they may have stored in their memories from inadequate former education and superficial acquaintance with the deeper streams of thought and emotion which really underlie and influence contemporary events. According to Professor Livingston, "public opinion today is almost entirely in the hands of newspaper men, feature writers, radio commentators and politicians. Such people are improvising under pressure of the demand for copy philosophies of history, theories of military strategy, systems of world organization—and on the basis of what? A talk with four peasants, a chat with two workingmen, luncheon with one royalist minister, tea with a French prelate, and the correspondent 'who has been all over Europe and knows' comes out with the dictum that the Republic in France is dead forever, that the British Empire is sure to fall, that the world will never again be as we knew it. We cannot blame the correspondent. He is doing the best he can, and we read his theories because we have nothing else to read."

Yet in thus summing up roughly yet with fair accuracy the sort of stuff with which the general public is overdosed all day long (and almost all night long as well, with the radio pouring out its stream of propaganda into the wee small hours), Professor Livingston seems rather ungrateful to the paper giving him space for his own opinions, and those of his subject, Croce. As a matter of fact our American press, at least, and the same thing is true of the press in most of the countries outside of the totalitarian centralization, gives to those readers who care for it plenty of material produced by the type of writer properly admired by both Croce and his reviewer. Such writers are described—and the definition is meant also to apply to some statesmen, and public leaders in general—in terms too ideal, no doubt, accurately to be applied to most actual statesmen and journalists and authors, yet the highly educated personage of the Crocean ideal, as described in Professor Livingston's words, might lead the public as wildly astray from the truth as any of the uneducated sensationalists if his fundamental philosophy, or religion, is wrong. Yet men who have profoundly studied history so that "they are able to bring the totality of human experience to bear upon most of the problems that arise in practical living" and able "to deal with situations that have no precedent in that portion of history which they know, with the critical insight that the discipline of historical reading alone bestows or promotes" have not been lacking.

The great trouble is that the audience competent to follow writers of the latter class, and thus open to their influence, is a small one, with small influence upon the shaping of public policies. One of the major problems of our democratic societies centers around this situation. It is the problem of enlarging and making practical the sphere in which genuinely educated public opinion may be brought to bear upon the shaping of public policy. As Professor Livingston says, just at present, unfortunately, "events come rushing upon us in breathless urgency and we cannot improvise an historical culture for our public men." But in looking forward to the brighter future which, in spite of everything now happening, it is a Christian and indeed a human duty and obligation to hope for, and to work for, it is clear that while historical education—and true philosophical and religious education—cannot be "improvised," the existing channels for their promotion must be kept open, and in the future greatly improved and widened. The present condition of our popular journalism and radio information is appalling; but there are bright spots in both, and these must be appreciated and developed. In practical form, papers like THE COMMONWEAL, struggling against terrific odds to provide vehicles for thoughtful journalism, have a real claim for support quite apart from all commercial considerations, which considerations have brought the popular press to its present miserable plight.

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The Stage & Screen

The Happy Days

"THE HAPPY DAYS" closes the theatre season of 1940-41 with a play of charm and tenderness, beautifully acted and directed. It stands with "The Beautiful People" and "Claudia" in a year in which these three plays alone possess a poetic touch. Indeed I should take these three plays as a touchstone of critical sensitivity. Miss Zoe Akins's adaptation of Claude-André Puget's "Les Jours Heureux" is exquisitely done, the Gallic atmosphere delicately suggested, yet the transition most believably made from France to an island in the St. Lawrence. There is little story, for "The Happy Days" is simply an episode of adolescence, but one so delightfully human, so ineffably tender, so delicately humorous, the dialogue so witty, the characterization so sure, that only a coarse-grained mind would ask for more. Five adolescents, three girls and two boys, are left alone in their house on the island when the mother of three of the children goes to a funeral. Two of the girls make up a tale of meeting an aviator, with whom one of the girls has fallen in love. An aviator who has had to make a forced landing really does appear, and all three girls fall in love with him. He leaves when he finds the havoc he has made, and we are left to feel that things will go on much as before. It is slight on the surface, but this doesn't mean there aren't deeper things under the apparently only slightly ruffled waters of sentiment. The five adolescents are five microcosms of the future. In each are the dreams, the longings, even the passions which later will burst into flower or into flame. Their thoughts, their emotions, their actions are trivial only to the unthinking or the insensitive. Perhaps the ending is too completely casual for thorough dramatic effect, but then life is often like that.

It is fortunate that M. Puget's play should have found an adaptor so completely sympathetic as is Miss Akins. Miss Akins is a poet who has written some of the loveliest of modern lyrics, and this quality is what is needed in M. Puget's play. "The Happy Days" is a dramatic lyric of youth's longings, poetry and regrets, and this is just what Miss Akins has made it. Such a play needs perfect casting and direction, and this it has received. Arthur Ripley shows a master hand in the sensitiveness of his handling of action, and Barbara Kent, Diana Barrymore, Joan Tetzel, Frederick Bradlee, Peter Scott and Edward Ashley are all perfectly suited to their parts. Miss Kent has distinction and quiet dignity; Miss Barrymore beauty, loveliness of voice, charm, magnetism; Miss Tetzel vivacity and life; Mr. Bradlee poise and humor; Mr. Scott equals Mr. Bradlee; and Mr. Ashley, the only mature member of the cast, acts and looks like Miss Barrymore's father of thirty years ago. And by the way, Mr. Barrymore may well be proud of his daughter. Miss Barrymore bids fair to carry her family's torch into the future. So it is that "The Happy Days" proves one of the happy nights

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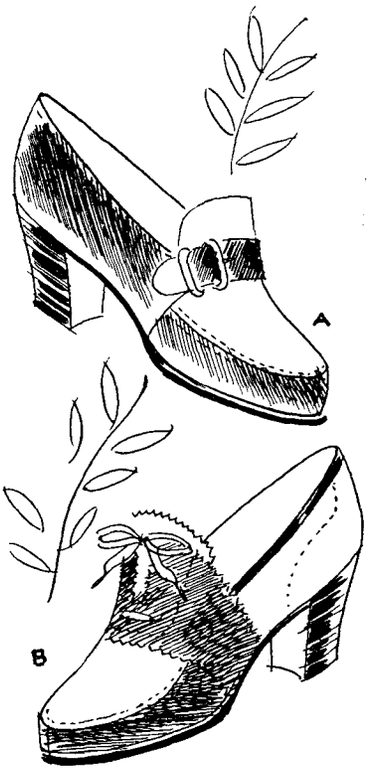

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of the season. It is not a play for the coarse of mind, or for those who insist that the stage must treat only of "modern problems." "The Happy Days" treats of eternal problems which will always be modern to those who are not blind. It was written and it is played for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, and such will love and cherish it. *(At Henry Miller's Theatre.)*

GRENVILLE VERNON.

For the Brain; For the Heart

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW goes out of his satirical way in his plays to make his characters behave very nicely at first and say well the good things you want to hear them say; then suddenly when things are progressing too smoothly in the right direction, he'll do an about turn, send the same characters merrily to the dogs while they say rather wicked things even more cleverly. By the final curtain, when you are completely muddled by the paradoxical turn of events, you realize that someone is being laughed at and you strongly suspect it is yourself. A good example of his mental gymnastics is *"Major Barbara"* which just arrived from England as the second of Shaw's plays to be filmed. After a sassy introduction full of typical Shavian wit, recited by the master himself (he says he's sending us his old plays just as we are sending the English our old destroyers, and he hopes we will have a hand in this new abolition of slavery), he presents his "parable." Once again that Salvation Army lassie, Major Barbara Undershaft, is in action; and the first man we see converted to beating the drum is Cusins, a professor of Greek who is won not so much by "the pleasant subject of religion" as by Barbara's own person and charm. But, just as our Major is almost successful in converting Bill Walker, a mean, blaspheming bully, her illusions are shattered; her faith in goodness is cruelly destroyed when the S. A.'s general accepts a large check from Barbara's father who made his millions in gunpowder. Cusins, grasping the irony of the situation, exclaims on the Army's veneration of two men who made big donations: Saints Bodgers (whiskey) and Undershaft (munitions). Not content with taking the Salvation Army for a ride, Shaw winds up with practically all the characters approving of Undershaft (whom Cusins calls Machiavelli) and being very glad to share in the profits of his huge cannon factories. "The way of life leads through the valley of death" because these profits are to be used to fight a greater evil—poverty.

Although Gabriel Pascal has given excellent production and direction to "Major Barbara," he was not so successful in cinematizing this Shaw item as he was with "Pygmalion." After the Salvation Army episodes the action stops too often to let the characters discuss Shaw's sociological ideas; and Shaw's wordiness, albeit witty wordiness, does not keep a film in motion. In spite of the high humor of the scenario and dialogue, written by Shaw himself from his play that first appeared in 1905, the picture remains cold and seldom warms up to reach the heart as it does in that one touching scene that shows Barbara crushed after the Army too gladly accepts her father's money. The fine acting throughout, however, helps to humanize the unattractive story. Wendy Hiller makes a lovely Barbara; I do wish her diction were not quite so perfect, that she could have forgotten a few of the lessons she learned as the heroine of "Pygmalion." Rex Harrison is appropriately influenced by Pan and Bacchus as the pragmatic Greek scholar; and Robert Morley is as satanic as Shaw would have him as the famous munitions king, a devil's disciple who upsets the apple cart by using his ill-gotten millions for a good cause. The very fact that Robert Newton's good performance as the vicious bully almost steals the picture proves the need for a strong man of action in a static, talky film. The cast is particularly fortunate in having Sybil Thorndike and Emlyn Williams in supporting rôles. Whether you like Shaw's arguments or not, here is a picture to stimulate the intellect. As one of the characters says, "You could do worse than hear Major Barbara take the Sunday service."

George Stevens is a producer who knows what cinema audiences want, and in *"Penny Serenade"* he gives them what they want: two handsome stars; a warm, human, different but story-bookish plot with plenty of situations concerning love mixed with joy and unhappiness; and mainly, some cuddly babies and youngsters who do nothing but make the audience sigh "aw" in unison. Morrie Ryskind wrote this sentimental screenplay from Martha Cheavens's story. As the picture opens, Irene Dunne is walking out on a marriage-gone-sour; but before she goes she plays selections from her scrap book-record album. Flashbacks, visualized with each piece of music, bring the story up to the present. "You Were Meant for Me" recalls her first meeting with Cary Grant. "Missouri Waltz" is for the courtship. "Moonlight and Roses" for the wedding. "Poor Butterfly" for the Tokyo incidents. Ah, those ecstatic days in Japan! The bride tells her husband of the coming baby. Even his lack of enthusiasm, his selfish boyishness, his extravagance cannot quell her happiness. But comes the earthquake! And her bitter disappointment after the miscarriage when she learns she can never have children! Back in the States life is drab indeed—until the couple adopt a baby. As Irene continues to change the records, the scenes are gay, sad, exciting, sweet, cruel, sentimental, realistic.

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Stevens has directed well the episodes that hang on this trick device of a musical chronology. And his actors do not fail him. Miss Dunne is in best form as the bride, mother, the ebullient, the heart-broken wife. Cary Grant turns in a surprise performance as he fills the dramatic requirements of his serious rôle. These two get fine assistance from Beulah Bondi as the head of an adoption society, and Edgar Buchanan as the friend who guides the couple through their trials and estrangements. His big scene, in which he bathes the baby, will put mothers in stitches and tears of delight. But there won't be a dry eye (male *or* female) when Grant movingly appeals to the Judge not to take away the baby. While women will swoon with compassion at the exigencies of motherhood and wifedom in "Penny Serenade," men will bristle at the husband's lack of sympathy and under-developed character. Both will agree that the film is unusually good entertainment.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Documents of Persecution

The Persecution of the Catholic Church in the Third Reich. Longmans. $3.00.

THOSE who compare Hitler to Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon often overlook his resemblance to Mahomet, and so they fail to grasp his real significance. The German Chancellor is much more than just another great conqueror or revolutionary leader. He is the prophet of a new religion. Like the prophet of Islam he has his own morality, his own Gospel, and his own God. To underestimate or deride him because of his origin is as sensible as seeing in Mahomet only a camel-driver from Mecca.

It is precisely because National Socialism is fundamentally a religion that the bitter conflict between the Church and the Third Reich has developed. The nazis claim the whole man body and soul, and while professing high regard for religious liberty, attempt to restrict the Church to a very closely supervised administration of the sacraments. The Church could never accept such a definition of her status and mission and hence must resist to the end. The opposition between the two sides is irreconcilable, and this must be kept in mind if particular acts of legislation on one hand and acts of defiance on the other are to be understood correctly.

Though the persecution of the Church is an old story it differs slightly in each country. The German Government is powerful, despotic and totalitarian. Its attack on the Church manifests the characteristic German traits of ruthlessness and efficiency. It wages war on all fronts at once, and from the cradle to the grave no German is free from the pressure it brings to bear. It is interesting to note that though the area of the conflict is wider than usual, there are few new weapons and no old one is neglected. The wealth of the Church, the vices of the clergy, corruption in the monasteries, the aberrations of Catholic morality, the divided allegiance theory, and the anti-national bias of the Church are the stock charges of the anti-Catholic agitator, and have been familiar to the English-speaking world for centuries. Doctor Goebbels is Thomas Cromwell brought up to date.

The resistance of the German Catholics has been admirable. Though deprived of their schools, press, organizations, political representatives, and the right to answer attacks they have rallied around their leaders and stood firm. The increasingly bitter onslaughts of the Government forces indicate the strength of their resistance. The war has isolated them completely and multiplied their trials. It was inevitable that they should sustain heavy losses, but their tenacious defense of a desperate position entitles them to the sympathetic support of the Catholic world.

There is one aspect of the German persecution that has particular interest for American Catholics. It is the first persecution of the Church in which the forces that mould non-Catholic opinion here have been on our side. Charges that found ready acceptance when brought against the Church in other countries have fallen flat this time. Even the immorality trials were discounted. The nazis have failed to convince anyone outside Germany of the justice of their case. American Catholics, suspicious of such unexpected support, may wonder if the accounts of the sufferings of the German Church are overdrawn. They will find a convincing answer in this valuable book. Without polemics of any kind it gives the evidence of the persecution. Here are the writings and speeches of the Pope and the German Hierarchy, the official decrees and instructions of the Government, and the speeches and teachings of the Party. The cumulative weight of this testimony is sufficient to establish the German persecution as the worst, because it is the most efficient, of modern times. The cartoons are very interesting. Nothing like them has been seen here since 1928.

FLORENCE D. COHALAN.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Men of Wealth. John T. Flynn. S. & S. $3.75.

EVERY ONCE in a while there appears a work which probes into the devious ways of those who are able, in one way or another, to accumulate for themselves an inordinate share of the earth's wealth, or, as in some cases, too great power over the political and social lives of the people who inhabit the earth. Such books as "The Robber Barons" and "The Dynasty of Death" brought home to the common man the fact that there are such forces, showed how these forces exploit and deprive, how they enter into the lives of every individual for good or for evil. "Men of Wealth" is an addition to that necessary mine of information, and if the idea is not particularly new, it is refreshing in a period that tends toward the reactionary, and the slant is new to those who are not regular readers of John T. Flynn.

Here are the brief stories of eleven Titans of money and one woman who outdid them all in ability and greed. From Jacob Fugger who, as early as the fifteenth century, anticipated capitalism, the book runs the gauntlet of famous brigands and capitalists down to the archetype of modern finance capitalists, J. Pierpont Morgan.

That is not to say that all the characters are parasitic in their money-grubbing. John D. Rockefeller was engaged in productive pursuits as was Robert Owen, whose paradoxical nature caused him to spend the first factory-made fortune on promoting socialism. Rockefeller's perfidies are already folklore, Owen is forgotten. The pietistic oil thief was a leader in exploitation and ruthlessness. The factory-owner-socialist fought the Girdlers of his day, trying to institute social reforms and actually putting some into practice in his own factory.

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John Law, the small time gambler whose brain child was the Mississippi Bubble, gave the world the first great example of modern banking and its inevitable companion, the panic. Nathan Rothschild and his brothers have left their evil mark in the form of international finance, in whose tangled skeins are to be found the world's miserable leaders and which plays such a part in modern warfare.

There is an interesting study of Sir Basil Zaharoff, the mystery man of munitions. A citizen of no country, he received the honors of all for the disservice of selling munitions to each, the while creating suspicion on the part of each and purposely setting them at each others' throats. The Mitsuis of Japan, a 250-year-old family dynasty that controlled the finances of Japan and looted the country, is noteworthy in that these Orientals used the same methods and techniques of finance-capitalism long before Japan had any contact with the Occident.

There are studies of Mark Hanna of unpleasant political memory; of Hetty Green who beat the Wall Streeters at their own game and who, despite millions, refused proper medical care to her young son, thereby causing him to lose a leg from an infection. She is the only miser in this rare collection of social sinners. Cornelius Vanderbilt, the Staten Island churl who bludgeoned his way to the top of the financial heap, is not a stranger but his chapter is well worth the reading.

Finally, though this is not the order of the book, we come to Cecil Rhodes, the creator of the British African empire and the first advocate of Union Now. Cecil Rhodes, whose fifth column in the form of the Rhodes Scholarship is designed to make Anglophiles of our most promising American students, is treated at length. This rascal and quasi-scholar, thiever of land and political visionary, brought the British Empire to the peak of its power.

Mr. Flynn is careful to bring his pet hate, the New Deal, into prominent comparison, especially with the deficit financing of the Mississippi Bubble débâcle. His opinions are doubly important because he is no defender of the capitalist system, no hireling of the NAM. He is insistent that the New Deal is trying to prolong the old order with its illusionary and backward belief in the economics of scarcity. He is almost bitter about the destruction of wealth to buoy up markets. It is a really good book and it required a deal of courage to release it at this particular time. It deserves a wide and popular reading.

WILLIAM M. CALLAHAN.

The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1885. *A. A. Taylor. Associated Publishers.* $3.00.
Lanterns on the Levee. William Alexander Percy. Knopf. $3.00.

IF I WERE GRANTED the power of a dictator, I should turn much of my attention to the South and compel white and Negro scholars to sit down by a log fire and talk it over. In this instance, I should say, "Mr. Taylor, if you could write as beautifully as Mr. Percy, and Mr. Percy, if you would straighten out your concepts of what is wrong with Negroes, poor whites and Southern cultures, you fellows could get some place, and I don't mean maybe." But not being that type of dictator, I can only report, and what a set of contradictory observations we have in these two books.

I recommend them to people who are trying to think through black and white race problems. A. A. Taylor, dean of the college and professor of history at Fisk University (Nashville, Tennessee), is a black man, quite black, and a Harvard man. William Alexander Percy is a white man, a native of the black belt in Mississippi, a plantation manager—he inherited this plague from his father. He, too, is a Harvard man. Mr. Taylor teaches Negroes while Mr. Percy worries about them.

Taylor, who has settled on nothing, has taken twenty hectic years of reconstruction (1865 to 1885) and has tried to find out what the freedmen, the ex-slaves, were trying to do for themselves, and also what was done to them. Mr. Taylor does not have the poetic touch—like Mr. Percy—but he does show that, no matter how dull the prose, interesting facts can hold a reader's eyes glued to the page until an interesting discovery is made firm in the mind. He makes it clear, for example, how amazingly interested in the Negro, groups of white Christians did get, after the Civil War. There are groups of Americans who hold to the opinion that nobody discovered the Negro and his trials and tribulations until Lenin came to power and lifted the lid off Pandora's box. But they are wrong. They have not heard of Braden, McKee, LeMoyne, Ogden, Spence, Morgan, Bennett, Cravath and hundreds more as the years unfolded; all white people and all ready to go to bat for the black man and his dignity of person.

Taylor tells of the beginnings of Negro education—not the first educated Negro, of course, but the first public schools for the freedman in Tennessee—and lets us know that there were Negroes who helped in the start of these schools. It was not all helpless black folk and well-meaning but misguided whites! No Chinese uprising under Trotsky, here! There were politicians, of course. One such man was the shifty, ruthless Governor Brownlow.

Who was this man Brownlow whom the aristocrats hated like poison, this poor white who threw aristocrats in jail at the drop of a hat? In our American "Balkans" Brownlow started off his career licking the boots of the aristocrats, and how he despised black slaves! Born in the mountains of Virginia where a man without slaves had only his whiteness to discuss in private and display on parade, Brownlow hated Negroes and told everybody about it. He was something of a public figure, and as "Parson" Brownlow he could shake down the rafters and rouse the dead. But he was—like the rest of the East-Tennessee and Carolina and Virginia mountain whites—a staunch Union man, or, just indifferent. Being *for the Union* gave his secret hatred of the aristocrats an outlet. Brownlow came to power with the fall of Lee at Appomattox. From this point on he was certainly the Negroes' Southerner. Taylor says:

> Brownlow was a practical politician. At the close of the war, despite his antipathy to Negroes, he accepted fully the emancipation of the slaves as a matter of national policy. His two great aims were to restore Tennessee to the Union under the control of the extreme loyalists and to humiliate those he considered traitors. In order to accomplish these purposes, he was fully prepared to utilize extreme measures.

The political side of the picture is not over-stressed in this book. It is good to know that the freedmen organized trade-unions in East Tennessee (1869) and by 1877, twelve years after Lee's surrender, Negro journeymen barbers were calling a strike against the practice of their employers (also Negroes!) of employing low-paid transient workers. It is significant, according to Mr. Taylor, that the "delegates were to be admitted [to the 1871 labor convention, to be held in Nashville] without reference to race, color or sex."

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Mr. Percy writes of his life, his times, his family, his interests and foibles, his inability to understand poor whites—he frankly calls them hopeless, which is wrong—his belief that Negroes are worth saving, etc., etc., without being very clear about how it should be done. The share-cropper system works well on paper, but two or three hundred dollars a year will hardly keep planters content, even if they can borrow all next year's profits before the seed has taken root. The South, the post-Civil-War South, the old culture, the passing aristocrats, the rising "crackers" and the KKK: these lay the beetle on Mr. Percy's brow. If he were a Russian, he would wear high boots on Sunday and work in a restaurant in Greenwich Village the rest of the week. In short, Mr. Percy is a remnant of fine silk torn from a coat of two colors: white owners and black slaves.

Mr. Percy's observations, on the whole, can be duplicated elsewhere. The trouble with this sort of book is that too many readers will think that this is a typical Negro situation. It is not a *Negro* situation, it is a peasantry situation, just as true with Chinese as with Negroes, true with any race and color living under similar conditions. It is the peasantry that Erskine Caldwell has pictured living in the Georgia hills. Mr. Percy's Negroes behave better than Mr. Percy's poor whites because Mr. Percy's Negroes still live under the shadow of slavery; Mr. Percy's "river rats" know deep down in their hearts that Mr. Percy and his class have no intention of giving up a single acre of land for their use, and if in their present state of mind it were surrendered, they would have no intention of cultivating it. What they would do would be to hire some Negroes at starvation wages, while they themselves would go into politics and tax the rest of the Percy tribe out of existence. Farming for farming's sake has not aroused much interest in the South.

Readers of THE COMMONWEAL cannot find in these books a solution. In Mr. Taylor's book I found evidence that Negroes are not just learning to behave like members of a highly competitive society. Further, that if the pressure is taken off, they—or is it *we*?—will give a good accounting. But for the Delta, for that black belt so dear to the hearts of European plotters eager to whip this country to its knees, we suggest that the Federal Government devise agricultural education right up to the point where it will . . . but Mr. Wallace is Vice-President, and he knows.

GEORGE STREATOR.

FICTION

When Shall the Dust Return? Julian Green. Harper. $2.50.

THE CHAIN is of black metal, so cunningly devised that it seems by some magic to be alive; it is the tangible link connecting the destinies of the characters, separated by centuries of time, who appear in the three stories in Julian Green's latest novel. The original, as is usual with Mr. Green, was written in French and was called "Varouna" after the ancient Aryan god of the universe whose all enveloping watchfulness surrounds both saint and sinner. The sun is the eye of Varouna and the wind his breath. Lord also of the oceans, it is out of the depths of the sea that the chain is cast up in the middle ages to be found by Hoel, a Welsh boy. In the ancient world, the chain has already brought power and ruin to its possessors, although in what buried city of the past it was wrought remains a secret. Sensing its evil, a hermit takes it from the boy and throws it back to the

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Next Week

THE U. S. AND HISPANIDAD, by Alfonso Junco, one of the leading Catholic writers is present-day Mexico, is a plea for real understanding of the Latin American point of view. It is an answer, in part, to Father Edwin A. Ryan's article on the same subject in an earlier issue. "Hispanidad, as such, is not properly a 'political cause,' but is something more elevated and more profound, transcending the merely political, circumstantial, shifting and contingent." North Americans sincere in their desire for better understanding of Latin America and aware of its importance should not miss this article next week.

ST. PAUL'S FIRST CENTURY, by Louis N. Sarbach, is a fascinating historical study of the scene of the Ninth National Eucharistic Congress to be held at the Twin Cities from June 23 to 26. This national celebration coincides with the centenary of the founding of St. Paul by the French missionary, Père Lucien Galtier, who arrived from Dubuque at this wilderness settlement known by the name "The Place Where They Sell Whiskey." Mr. Sarbach's fascinating article is a tapestry of a hundred years of civic and Church history.

GATTI-CASSAZA'S METROPOLITAN, by Grenville Vernon, carries on the story of modern opera in New York City from Oscar Hammerstein and the Manhattan Opera House featured elsewhere in this issue. The second article continues the colorful procession of famous tenors and prima donnas and conductors, together with unforgettable scenes on and behind the stage. A "must" for all music and opera-lovers.

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waves but Hoel dreams that he will find it again. So he does, on the body of the woman with whom his destiny is linked, but he finds it only after he has cut her throat. He is on his way to the scaffold when he sees the lovely girl who will be reborn in Renaissance France as Helène. On this second tale, with its grim background of necromancy and incest, Mr. Green has expended his greatest effort. Apparently it is the power of Helène's father's evil thoughts which brings the chain into her possession and, although she escapes a hideous plot, her spirit is crushed and she enters a convent to offer her life in expiation of the sin. In the third story, Jeanne, a modern novelist, while delving into the records of an old trial on witchcraft, feels a mysterious identity between herself and the sixteenth century nun who was Helène. She becomes the heroine of Jeanne's novel and Jeanne finds herself being gradually absorbed by her heroine. In terror of the subtle barrier which is being created between herself and her husband, Jeanne destroys her manuscript. Then one day in the British Museum, Jeanne and Louis come upon a black metal chain. The label records that it was washed up on a beach in 1850 and may be of Phoenician origin, but Louis and Jeanne suddenly realize that they have seen it often before. That night Jeanne dreams that she is wearing the chain and that Helène comes and fastens a cross to it. Helène's prayers have broken the curse.

The three tales seemed brewed from a decoction of palingenesis, metemspychosis, cultural anthropology and psychoanalysis, with a tincture of black magic. No conclusion seems to be reached other than that dreams are atavistic and that human lives seem to have inexplicably loose threads—unless they are part of a larger skein. How the chain received its evil properties is Varouna's mystery. There is however, an optimism unusual to the author in the final reunion of the man and woman who had eluded each other through the centuries, and the picaresque adventures of the vagabond, Hoel, are told in excellently simple and direct narrative. E. V. R. WYATT.

In the Groove

TWO MONTHS' shipments of discs await reviewing in this column, with more to arrive shortly. At this writing, I shall deal with a few of the larger serious works and bring the popular records up to date.

Beethoven's magnificent *Missa Solemnis,* composed (though three years too late for actual performance) for the installation of an archduke-archbishop of Olmütz, receives a fine recording at the hands of Sergei Koussevitzky, the Boston Symphony, the Harvard Glee Club, the Radcliffe Choral Society and four soloists (Jeanette Vreeland, Anna Kaskas, John Priebe and Norman Cordon). The breadth of Beethoven's faith—humanitarian rather than religious—is well set forth by Dr. Koussevitzky, and the recording is excellent, considering that it was made during concert performances (two Victor albums, $13). Beethoven's *Third* or *Eroica Symphony* is now offered in two new recordings. Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic Symphony take most of the honors (Columbia, $6.50). Yet Toscanini fans may wish to pass up this warm, brilliantly recorded version in favor of the NBC Symphony album—done with a typical Toscanini energy and drive, but marred by dull, woolly recording (Victor, $7).

The Brahms *Third Symphony* likewise offers two

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choices. Frederick Stock and the Chicago Symphony are well recorded, sound mellow, very German, while Hans Kindler and the National Symphony (Washington, D. C.) present a more brilliant version (Columbia and Victor, each $4.50). Another great symphony (for my money, that is) gets its first contemporary recording: Bruckner's *Fifth,* sometimes called the "Church" (I don't know why) and sometimes the "Tragic" (more likely). It is very long, like most Bruckner symphonies: one reason why the partisans of the devout Austrian have such a hard battle to fight. Recordings make Bruckner easier to follow. In this one, a sitting should be devoted to the long, beautiful slow movement, which culminates in a sinuous counterpoint threading over the theme. (Victor, two albums, $10.)

"Fats" Waller serves a platterful of good Southern-style music in his latest, *All That Meat and No Potatoes* (Bluebird). The vocalizing is good-humored, the piano in tune, and Mr. Waller feeling fine. Not to be ignored by any means is the fine little jazz band which plays along with this talented pianist. Duke Ellington's *Blue Serge* (Victor) is a mournful but not monotonous bit of Harlem jazz, backed by a happier number, *Jumpin' Pumpkin.* The Duke consistently produces the finest in this particular kind of music.

Decca's album sets are long on variety. Volume I of *Gems of Jazz* includes two Mildred Bailey records, *Honeysuckle Rose* and *Willow Tree; Squeeze Me* and *Downhearted Blues.* Jess Stacy's pianism in *The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise* backs Meade "Lux" Lewis on *Honky Tonk Train Blues.* Joe Marsala and his Delta Six pair *Twelve Bar Stampede* with *Feather Bed Lament.* Bud Freeman and his Windy City Five complete the album with *Tillie's Downtown Now, The Buzzard, What Is There to Say* and *Keep Smiling at Trouble.* While these are all interesting in a historical sense, the Marsala and Freeman records are better examples of the individual talents of the artists.

A pair of sophisticated and amusing items are Danny Kaye's records from the current Broadway hit, *Lady in the Dark—Jenny* and *Tschaikowsky,* the latter a bright rhyming of all the Russian composers' names anyone ever heard of (Columbia). Less eyebrow-lifting, and more fun for the young, are *Alexander the Swoose* by Kay Kyser (Columbia) and *That's Her Mason Dixon Line* by Will Bradley (Columbia). They'll be hummed over many a chocolate soda this spring.

The stars of traditional swing (not to be confused with pure jazz)—Goodman, Krupa and Shaw—produce some noteworthy discs. Benny Goodman shows off the sweet clarity of his clarinet in *I'm Not Complainin'* (Columbia); much more interesting than some of his recent offerings, possibly because less strained. Gene Krupa beats it out on *Wire Brush Stomp,* and the smell of spearmint almost arises from the disc (Okeh). For drum-fanciers only. *Chantez le Bas* and *Danza Lucumi* (Victor) are platter-mates for Artie Shaw's clarinet calisthenics. The titles show where the real weakness lies—over-refinement—but Shaw's clarinet is brilliant and daring.

The United Hot Clubs of America finish off their collection of oldtime "Muggsy" Spanier recordings with a pair that made jazz history: *Jazz Me Blues* and *Sister Kate.* So often the glory goes to dead or retired jazzmen—like "Bix" Biederbecke—but Spanier is still one of the greatest cornetists, and the same fire that stirs in these 1927 records can be heard undiminished today.

C. J. BALLIETT, JR.

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The Inner Forum

SATURDAY, May 12, saw the dedication in Morristown, N. J., of a newly and beautifully built monastery of Discalced Carmelite Nuns. The consecration of the chapel took place at 7 A.M. with Bishop McLaughlin of Paterson officiating. The sermon at the Mass was preached by Monsignor Fulton Sheen. The whole group of buildings is charming, simple and of great dignity.

The Discalced Carmelite Nuns have always had a special significance for Americans, since their order supplied the first strictly contemplative community to English-speaking North America. This foundation had originated in Antwerp in 1619, being intended for English women who had a vocation for the contemplative life which they might not fulfill in their own country. The French revolution made the English Carmelites flee the Continent, half of them settling ultimately at Lanherne in Cornwall, and the other half proceeding to New York, where they arrived on July 2, 1790. On October 15 of the same year their first convent was inaugurated, on the property of Mr. Baker Brooke, about four miles from Port Tobacco, Charles County, Maryland. Later (1830) a new site was found within the city of Baltimore. Since that time the order has spread into many states. The Motherhouse is still at Baltimore. There are in all 28 US houses—probably more than those of any other contemplative order for women.

Saint Theresa of Avila, foundress of the Discalced Carmelites, was a reformer of the older rule, the first women Carmelites having appeared about 1450. The Carmelite monks constitute the only order having a tradition of foundation before the Christian era; they supposedly stem from a band of Jewish "Sons of the Prophets" Elias and Eliseus. It is possible that they can justly claim connection with the ancient eremitical atmosphere of Mount Carmel, going well back of the New Law; but their present continuous history can be traced back no further than 1155. Within seventy-five years the order appeared in Europe, where it flourished. Saint Theresa's reform was in the direction of a greater austerity; she made of her nuns ("discalced") pure contemplatives, who do only such manual labor as is necessary for the maintenance of their convents. They are women dedicated to the mystical life and to intercessory prayer, especially for the missions. Saint Theresa of the Little Flower is the perfect embodiment of the great foundress's ideal. Those who assert that the contemplative life has no appeal for Americans might well ponder the growth of the order in this country.

CONTRIBUTORS

Henry SOMERVILLE writes on economic subjects and has long served as editor of the Toronto *Catholic Register*.

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